



Office of the
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Simard Report: A constructive study according to the Commissioner of Official Languages

The Commissioner of Official Languages, Dr. Dyane Adam, welcomes the publication today of Senator Jean-Maurice Simard's study. Entitled *Bridging the Gap: From Oblivion to the Rule of Law*, the study postulates that the vitality and development of the Francophone and Acadian communities is a fundamental obligation for Canada.

"This is an admirable undertaking and a constructive study which, in my opinion, must be welcomed in a positive spirit", declared the Commissioner. As well, Dr. Adam underlined the fact that the Simard Report reflects many of her own preoccupations and takes up certain recommendations made by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

The study takes a critical look at certain behaviours in all levels of government. It is written so as to stimulate reflection and to question certain pre-conceived notions. Furthermore, it paves the way for a public debate about the place of English and French as Canada's official languages, and about the means to ensure the development of minority official language communities.

The Commissioner stresses the fact that we all have a responsibility towards the vitality of English and French and the vitality of both linguistic communities, particularly those in a minority situation because they are the most fragile. "This report invites all of us, government and community leaders, as well as opinion leaders in Canadian society, to fully embrace this fundamental obligation for Canada, which is to enhance the vitality of minority communities."

Our governments have a special responsibility in this regard. In fact, studies done by the Commissioner's Office show that, contrary to the linguistic majorities, the Anglophone and Francophone linguistic minorities in Canada do not always benefit fairly from federal programs and services.

"This is why I sincerely hope that the government of Canada will seriously examine the recommendations made by Senator Simard. The House of Commons Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages would seem to me to be an appropriate forum to debate these issues. As for myself, I intend to thoroughly study the report and to do everything in my power to ensure that its objectives are achieved", concluded Dr. Adam.

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Information

Commissioner's Representatives

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